

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Tuesday, December 14. 1708.

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**T**HE *Observer* cannot be uneasy at my taking any Part of his Work out of his Hands, I shall at any Time accept of the same Assistance from him; but having been lately upon the Spot, perhaps I can take this bold Challenger up with the more Advantage upon this Particular; and for the rest, there is Room enough and Advantage enough in the Cause for him to deal with an Adversary, that insults before his Victory, and brags before he has put his Armour off.

In the *Rehearsal of Wednesday, Dec. 8.* He brings in his Country-man in a mighty Fury, that he must never see his Face again; for that he has told a notorious Lie in saying, that any Ministers in *Scotland* have been prosecuted, or their Meetings shut up, who have qualified themselves by taking the Oath, and praying for the QUEEN—And all this is a ridiculous Rally upon the *Observer*, who it seems challenges him to name them; *name them, name them, says the Country-man tauntingly upon the Observer.*

And now, Mr. *Rehearsal*, having rung his Bells backward, or beat a Call, as we may say, to bring the People about him, begins, and he names them—*In an ill Hour have you done it for your Friends, I assure you, good Mr. Rehearsal, and they have little to thank you for in it; since you thereby oblige us to expose the black Practices, the Scandals and Immoralities for which these Men, that you say are Qualified, are Deposed. These are not Prosecuted as Ministers and as Jacobites—but deposed as Scandals to the Ministry,*

Ministry, and Reproaches to Religion, as Men not fit to be Teachers of others, or Dispensers of Holy Things; but to have every House shut up they should offer to Preach in—It is no matter who such Men swear to, or who they Pray for; and you ought to have been more careful of the Reputation of your Friends, than to espouse these as part of their Number—Nor do the Jacobite Clergy justify the Conduct of such Men: Nay, some of them being Men of Vertue, have desired that the Scandalous among them might be Prosecuted: And since the necessity of this publishing is put upon us, by the Adversary, the Persons concern'd must thank him for it, and the blame, if any, must lye at his Door, for it is not my Choice to do it: I am forward enough to spare the Characters of Men; a great many of the Jacobite Clergy are Men of Vertue and Men of Modesty, and 'tis pity they should be rank'd with Men of Crime; since then Mr. *Rehearsal* is come to naming of Names, I have one Question to ask of him, and desire he would answer it directly.

*How many Ministers can be name in Scotland, who are now prosecuted, that have qualified by taking the Oaths, praying for the Queen, &c. who are not under PUBLICK CENSURE for Scandal and Immoralities?*

And let him NAME THEM, I do not tell him positively there are none at all, tho' I believe there are none; but I undertake to tell him, there are but very few—And perhaps I may make them so few as to be next to none, before He and I part with the Argument.

And now I am under the Necessity of *Disqualifying*, (if I may be allow'd that new Word) his excepted Names, but to shew him, that I will go no farther than he drives me, into the Lay fall of his Friends Reputation, I'll name him but one, promising him more at Demand; and this one may serve for a Reply to him, and the *Narrative* he speaks of, since the Person is brought in by both of them, I mean, Mr. *Alexander Herriot* of *Muscleburgh*, as a persecuted Man having qualified according to Law.

And this Account you may have, as I have had it in Writing, from such Authori-

ties as are unquestion'd, and the Original is ready to be produc'd for any one's Satisfaction, having had it long by me, little thinking to be oblig'd to make this Use of it.

*The Account of the Muscleburgh Meeting-House is as follows.*

MR. *Alexander Herriot* was sometime Minister of *Dalkeith*, but was depos'd and depriv'd by the Synod of *Lorburn* and *Tweeddale* for Scandal and Negligence; and being prohibit to preach, did thereafter set up a Meeting-House in the said Town of *Dalkeith*; and having contemn'd all the Church-Judicatories, and refus'd to desist upon the Orders issued out by them, the Matter was brought before the Privy-Council—Who finding the Sentence very just, and Mr. *Herriot* to be a Man of a scandalous Life, they ordain'd his said Meeting-House to be shut up, as appears by an Act of Council, dated May 7. 1697.

Upon this Mr. *Herriot* left the Place, and went to *Muscleburgh*, and set up a Meeting-Place there; but the Privy Council receiving Information of this Contempt of their Authority, and by the 23d Act of the first Parliament *William and Mary*, Anno 1693. All Magistrates, Judges, and Officers of Justice being ordain'd to give their Assistance for making the Censures and Sentences of the Church and Judicatories thereof to be obey'd, and otherways effectual; the said Privy-Council by another Act, dated the 21 April 1708. renewed their former Act, and caus'd Mr. *Herriot's* new Meeting-House to be also shut up.

Mr. *Herriot* to elude this Law, causes himself to be pursu'd before the Justices of the Peace, as a Person not qualified by Law to preach; not having taken the Oaths, &c. nor praying for the QUEEN; and being call'd to answer, offers to prove he had done both, (and indeed he scruples no Oaths at all, but took all they offer'd him both in the late Government and in this). Upon this, being dismissed, he looks upon himself as licens'd to preach—But his Meeting-House continued to be shut up, and he was told, that his having qualified or not qualified by taking the Oaths was



not HIS CASE; but being depos'd by legal Process he was not to be esteem'd a Minister, and his taking the Oaths, &c. could not take off the Sentence of Deposition, or license him to preach any more than a private Person, that never had been a Minister, or to that Effect.

Upon this ——— Some of Mr. Herriot's Hearers contrive a Way to get the Meeting House Door broke open by Force; and one Hugh Hay, a Salt Grier, Anglicé a Steward of a Salt Work — One disoblige'd at the Church too, for having been rebuk'd by the Minister for Swearing, Drunkenness, and other Immoralities, goes to the Custom House Officer, and tells him, he could inform him, where some uncustom'd Goods lay conceal'd, and gets the Waiter to go to the Magistrate for a Warrant to search suspected Places, and went with him to get the Warrant; the Waiter being a Stranger, having got his Warrant, is brought to the Meeting House, and a Guard of Soldiers with him, and falls to work to break open the Door, which was all that Hay wanted; but the Neighbours coming in at the Noise, and acquainting them how it was, the Waiter and Soldiers fell off, and had like to have paid Hay in a rough Coin for abusing them, but he was proceed'd before a Magistrate for cursing and swearing, and beating a Man, that would not assist in breaking open the Place.

Mr. Herriot finding himself disappointed in this Project, continues preaching in another House, and is under Process for Contempt of the Law as above.

The several Clauses in Mr. Herriot's Process before the Synod of Lothian and Tweedale, for which he was depos'd from the Ministry, were,

1. Unbecoming Levity in his Conversation — Such as dancing about a Bonfire publicly in the Street with Pipe and Drum, hallooing and drinking Healths upon his Knees.

2. Unreasonable pressing and threatening his Parishioners in the Case of taking Oaths against or contrary to their Consciences.

3. Indecent railing from the Pulpit on particular Persons of the highest Rank in the Kingdom.

4. Excessive Prosecuting People for Church Irregularities; to the causing exorbitant Fines to be levy'd on them, for which some have been forc'd to sell their Possessions, and others to flee the Country.

5. Negligence in exercising Church Discipline in Cases of gross Scandal.

6. Constant Omission of Ministerial Visitation of Families.

7. Giving Evidence of his Joy for the Defeat of King William's Army at Gillecrankie ——— Cum aliis.

These were the Heads of his Charge, and so many of these were proved upon him, as to oblige the Synod to censure and depose him; but he struggled with them so hard, removing it from Presbytery to Synod, &c. that he kept it a great while depending, and at last brought it before the Privy-Council, but was condemn'd by all, and finally turn'd out of the Ministry.

And now, Mr. Rehearsal, what think you? I give you Joy of one of your qualify'd Ministers, if this Account is true, as I have all the Reason in the World to think it is, having receiv'd it from unquestionable Hands; you will have small Reason to glory in the Victory you think you have got over the *Observer* — If you have a Mind to make any farther Enquiry into these Things, draw a Bill upon me for another, of your *ibree*, and I'll pay you at Sight.

But if you have any Respect to the Protestant Religion, and to the Honour of the Reformation, or any Pity for the Infirmitis of your Friends, forbear driving me to this Necessity, and with me consent to draw a Curtain of Oblivion over these dark Things, that future Ages may never hear of them, and this Age may learn to forget them — And think not this a Boast, for rest assur'd Mr. Rehearsal, I have not spent my Time to ill in Scotland, but I have brought with me the true Abstracts of all the Processes of these Affairs, copied from the Registers, and fairly vouch'd, and shall be always ready for you.